

SPEECH OF HON. OWEN LOVEJOY, OF ILLINOIS

Delivered in the U. S. House of Representatives, April 5, 1860.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. LOVEJOY said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House has been occupied for several days in the discussion of the subject of polygamy. The Republican party, of which I am a member, stands pledged since 1856 to the extermination, so far as the Federal Government has the power, of the twin relics of barbarism, slavery and polygamy. We have this power in the Territories of the United States.

Now, sir, as we anticipate a death blow having been given to one of these twins, I propose to pay my respects to the other. I want to see them both strangled and go down together, as they both richly deserve.

Mr. COBB. I rise to a question of order.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman will state his question of order.

Mr. COBB. I was going to raise a question of order upon the right of the gentleman to discuss the question of the "twin relics," under the new rule we have adopted. However, I will not interfere; the gentleman may go on with his speech.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I am entitled to the floor; I do not yield to the gentleman; and I will proceed with my remarks within my hour, with the gentleman's permission, or without it.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair supposes that general debate is in order upon this bill, the House now being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and no special order pending.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I was about to say, when interrupted, that I am aware that the practical question presented to this House and to the country is, whether slavery shall be extended beyond its present limits, as that is the only question over which they have exclusive jurisdiction. And if slavery were contented to remain restricted, and find its future where it now is, we might perhaps forbear this discussion. But when it is proposed to extend what is termed an institution—but which is not an institution; which is simply a practice—the question naturally arises, what is the nature, what are the influences, and what are the elements of this practice, and what will they prove to be if allowed expansion?

I am aware it has been stated upon this floor that the *morale* of slavery is settled; that its ethics are no longer to be discussed; that they were settled ages ago by the Stagyrite of Greece, and have been reaffirmed and re-established by the Chanticleer of Ohio, [Mr. Cox,] in rhetoric gorgeous as sunset's glow. We are told that where slavery will pay, slaveholding will go. Precisely upon the same principle we might say, that where robbery will pay, robbery will go; where piracy will pay, piracy will go; and where ad-pose human flesh is cheaper than that of beeves, cannibalism will go, because it will pay. Sir,

than robbery, than piracy, than polygamy, slaveholding is worse—more criminal, more injurious to man, and consequently more offensive to God.

Slaveholding has been justly designated as the sum of all villainy. Put every crime perpetrated among men into a moral crucible, and dissolve and combine them all, and the resultant amalgam is slaveholding. It has the violence of robbery.

A MEMBER. You are joking.

Mr. LOVEJOY. No, sir; I am speaking in dead earnest, before God, God's own truth. It has the violence of robbery, the blood and cruelty of piracy, and the offensive and brutal lusts of polygamy, all combined and concentrated in itself, with aggravations that neither one of these crimes ever knew or dreamed of.

Mr. Chairman, the justification of slavery is placed, so far as I know, mainly upon these grounds: the inferiority of the enslaved race; the fact that enslaving men imparts Christianity and civilization to them; and, thirdly, the guaranties of the Constitution. These are the three main arguments presented to justify slavery, and consequently to justify its expansion. And, by the way, I hold that the extreme men, as they are called, on this question, are the only men who have the logic of it. I am right, or the fire-eaters are right. If slavery is right in Virginia, it is right in Kansas. If it is wrong in Kansas, it is wrong everywhere.

Now, sir, in regard to the first point—the inferiority of the enslaved race. We may concede it as a matter of fact, that it is inferior; but does it follow, therefore, that it is right to enslave a man simply because he is inferior? This, to me, is a most abhorrent doctrine. It would place the weak everywhere at the mercy of the strong; it would place the poor at the mercy of the rich; it would place those that are deficient in intellect at the mercy of those that are gifted in mental endowment.

The principle of enslaving human beings because they are inferior, is this: If a man is a cripple, trip him up; if he is old and weak, and bowed with the weight of years, strike him, for he cannot strike back; if idiotic, take advantage of him; and if a child, deceive him. This, sir, this is the doctrine of Democrats, and the doctrine of devils as well; and there is no place in the universe, outside the five points of hell and the Democratic party, where the practice and prevalence of such doctrines would not be a disgrace. [Laughter.] If the strong of the earth are to enslave the weak here, it would justify angels in enslaving men, because they are superior; and archangels in turn would be justified in subjugating those who are inferior in intellect and position, and ultimately it would transform Jehovah into an infinite Juggernaut, rolling the huge wheels of his Omnipotence—

[Mr. LOVEJOY had advanced into the area, and

occupied the space fronting the Democratic benches.]

Mr. PRYOR, (advancing from the Democratic side of the House toward the area where Mr. LOVEJOY stood.) The gentleman from Illinois [Mr. LOVEJOY] shall not approach this side of the House, shaking his fists, and talking in the way he has talked. It is bad enough to be compelled to sit here and hear him utter his treasonable and insulting language. But he *shall not*, sir, come upon this side of the House, shaking his fist in our faces.

Mr. FARNSWORTH. It is not for the gentleman to say what is treason and what is not.

Mr. POTTER. We listened to gentlemen upon the other side for eight weeks, when they denounced the members upon this side with violent and offensive language. We listened to them quietly, and heard them through. And now, sir, this side *shall* be heard, let the consequences be what they may.

Mr. PRYOR. The point I make is this—

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair will receive no motion, and hear no gentleman, until members resume their seats, and order is restored in the Hall.

Mr. COX. I rise to a point of order. I insist that the gentleman from Illinois shall speak from his seat.

Mr. PRYOR. That is the point I make. Let the gentleman speak from his seat, and say all under the rules he is entitled to say; but, sir, he *shall not* come upon this side, shaking his fist in our faces, and talking in the style he has talked. He shall not come here gesticulating in a menacing and ruffianly manner.

Mr. POTTER. You are doing the same thing.

The CHAIRMAN. Gentlemen will resume their seats.

Mr. COX. If the gentleman from Illinois goes on as he has, a guardian will have to be appointed for him.

Mr. BARKSDALE, (addressing Mr. LOVEJOY.) You shall not come upon this side of the House.

Mr. ADRAIN. To avoid all further difficulty, I suggest to the gentleman from Illinois to speak from his seat. We all know him to be a man of courage, and that he cannot be intimidated.

Mr. PRYOR. No one wants to intimidate him.

Mr. LOVEJOY. Nobody can intimidate me.

Mr. ADRAIN. I know that. I suggest to the gentleman that he continue his speech from his seat.

[Thirty or forty of the members from both sides of the House gathered in the area about Mr. LOVEJOY and Mr. PRYOR, and there was increased confusion.]

Mr. JOHN COCHRANE. I move that the Committee rise, as it is the only way we can get rid of this disturbance.

Mr. POTTER. I do not believe that side of the House can say *where* a member shall speak; and they shall not say it.

Mr. SINGLETON. The gentleman from Illinois shall not make that speech upon this side of the House.

Mr. BURNETT. There is a rule of this House which requires each man to speak from his seat. The gentleman from Illinois was not in his seat when he was speaking. He cannot and he shall not cross this Hall to this side in a menacing

manner. He *shall not*, let the consequences be what they will. He must speak from his seat.

Mr. GROW. I move that the Committee rise.

The CHAIRMAN. Gentlemen must resume their seats.

Mr. COX. Let the gentleman from Illinois take his seat.

Mr. WASHBURN, of Illinois. Let others be seated, and let my colleague proceed.

Mr. POTTER. The gentleman from Illinois can take care of himself, without the assistance of the other side.

Mr. KELLOGG, of Illinois. I say to gentlemen, that my colleague shall speak; that he is in order, and will not commit a breach of the rules of the House; if he does, I will be the first to rebuke him; but he shall have his rights according to the rules of the House, and in no wise shall they be abridged or interfered with. He shall be heard upon this floor, and at this time.

Mr. BRIGGS. Then let him go upon his own side.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair calls the Committee to order; and if gentlemen do not come to order, he will call the Speaker to the chair, and report the disorder to the House.

Mr. FLORENCE. I move that the Committee rise. It is impossible to quell the disturbance without doing so.

The CHAIRMAN. The Speaker will take the chair.

The Chairman [Mr. WASHBURN, of Maine] vacated the chair, and the Speaker resumed it.

The SPEAKER. The Chair calls the House to order. I desire gentlemen of the House to take their seats.

Mr. FLORENCE. Every one, upon either and all sides.

Mr. JOHN COCHRANE. The Committee has risen; has it not?

The SPEAKER. The Chair requests gentlemen to respect the authority of the House, and take their seats.

Mr. BARKSDALE. Order that black-hearted scoundrel and nigger-stealing thief to take his seat, and this side of the House will do it.

Mr. McQUEEN. We will allow nobody to come over from that side of the House and bully us on this side. [Cries of "Sit down!" "Sit down!" from all sides of the House.]

The SPEAKER. The Chair desires gentlemen to take their seats.

Mr. BOCOCK. I, for one, will do so with pleasure, promptly, when the Speaker requires it. I only ask that everybody shall do so. I think this whole matter can be settled, if the gentleman speaking, and every other gentleman, will take his seat.

Mr. BURNETT. I rise to a privileged question.

The SPEAKER. The Chair cannot recognise anybody, until gentlemen take their seats.

Mr. BURNETT. Then, let everybody take his seat, and let order be enforced.

The SPEAKER. Gentlemen will take their seats, without distinction.

Members gradually withdrew from the open area in front of the Speaker's chair, and resumed their seats. Order being at length restored,

Mr. WASHBURN, of Maine, (Chairman of the Committee,) said: In the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, disorder arose,

which prevented the transaction of business, and the Chair was compelled to call the Speaker to the chair, and to report the facts to the House.

Mr. ELY. I move that the House do now adjourn.

Mr. WASHBURN, of Maine. The Chairman of the Committee states that if order is likely to be preserved, so that proceedings can go on, the Chairman of the Committee will resume the chair.

The SPEAKER. Order having been restored, the Speaker will leave the chair, and the Chairman of the Committee will take it.

Mr. WASHBURN, of Maine, resumed the chair, and announced that the gentleman from Illinois was entitled to the floor.

Mr. LOVEJOY. Mr. Chairman, I desire to violate no rule of the House.

Mr. BOYCE. Then behave yourself.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I wish to learn whether it is a violation of the rules to occupy this space in front of the Speaker's chair, or any portion of it? If so, I will cheerfully yield; if not, I claim the right to choose my own position.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair understands that the rules require that every gentleman shall speak from his seat.

Mr. CURTIS. Or from the Clerk's desk.

Mr. BURNETT. The gentleman has the right to do that.

Mr. McCLERNAND. Let him speak from the Clerk's desk.

Mr. ASHLEY. It has been the habit of gentlemen to come into the aisle and choose their own position.

Mr. ADRAIN. It is a very bad habit, and we had better change it.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair is aware that such has been the custom; but if the rule is insisted on, it is the duty of the Chair to enforce it.

Mr. ADRAIN. I hope it will be insisted on.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Illinois will speak from his seat.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I have no seat.

Mr. ASHLEY. Nor any other member.

Mr. LOVEJOY (taking his place in the Clerk's desk) resumed. Mr. Chairman, I was about stating, when interrupted, that the principle upon which slaveholding was sought to be justified in this country would, if carried out in the affairs of the universe, transform Jehovah, the Supreme, into an infinite Juggernaut, rolling the huge wheels of his omnipotence, axle-deep, amid the crushed, and mangled, and bleeding bodies of human beings, on the ground that he was infinitely superior, and that they were an inferior race.

Mr. GARTRELL, (in his seat.) The man is crazy.

Mr. LOVEJOY. The second ground upon which it is attempted to justify slavery, or slaveholding, is, that it is a mode of imparting Christianity and civilization to the slaves. Mr. Chairman, I would like to know how slaveholding communities can impart that of which they are not in the possession? The truth is, that the practice of slaveholding has a powerful tendency to drag communities back to barbarism. It is actually having that effect upon the slave States of this Union; and were it not for the Christian

women that have gone from free States and intermarried in the slave States—and were it not for those noble women of the slave States, that preserve womanly purity and Christianity, in spite of the unhappy influences of slaveholding, the slave States to-day would be as far back in barbarism as the State of Mexico.

It is simply from that infiltration—

Mr. SINGLETON. I wish to know if the gentleman intends to cast any insinuation or slur on the women of the South. I want to know that, distinctly and emphatically; because if he does, I will hold him personally accountable for it.

Several MEMBERS. Oh, no. He gives all praise to the women of the South. He compliments them.

Mr. SINGLETON. I repeat, that if he intended to asperse Southern women, or to compliment the women of the North at their expense, I will hold him accountable for it.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Mississippi is not in order. The gentleman from Illinois will proceed.

Mr. LOVEJOY. It is simply by this contact with free communities; it is, as I said, from the fact that Christian women went from free States, and that the Christian women of slave States—who have not the poor privilege that Sarah of old had of sending the Hagars and Ishmaels to the wilderness—maintained their purity and Christian character, and their testimony against the system, that they were prevented from that retrocession toward barbarism.

Several MEMBERS. That is what he said before.

Mr. LOVEJOY. Sir, if you step into the Smithsonian Institution, or into the Patent Office, you will find implements of husbandry imported from Japan and China, showing just about the same development in civilization as the implements that you find on the plantations. Now, sir, the truth is, that the practice of slaveholding drags slaveholding communities further below the plane of the Christian civilization of the age, than the civilization which the slave receives elevates him above the plane of heathenism by being held in these Christian communities. Sir, how do they impart civilization and Christianity? It is a strange mode of Christianizing a race to turn them over into brutism without any legal marriage. Among the four million slaves in this country, there is not a single husband or wife. There is not legally a single father or child. There is not a single home or hearthstone among these four million. And you propose to civilize and Christianize a people without giving them homes, without allowing them the conjugal and parental relations, and without having those relations sanctioned and protected by law.

Mr. Chairman, no community can make one step of progress in civilizing a race till you give them homes; till you protect the sanctity of the home, as we hold it should be protected in regard to these Mormons on the plains of Utah. Christianizing them, sir! Christianizing them by a new process. The slave States have a right to an exclusive patent for it. Taking them out in the sight of the church, as one was taken out not long ago in the State of Tennessee, by a Presbyterian elder, and laid down on his face on the ground, his hands and feet extended to their utmost tension, and tied to pickets, and the Gos-

and whipped into him with the broad side of a hand-saw, discolored wheels of sanctification being raised between the teeth every time this Gospel agency fell upon the naked and quivering flesh of the tortured convert. [Laughter.]

A Democratic MEMBER. Did he get the Gospel in? [Laughter.]

Mr. LOVEJOY. Christianized as a young girl was Christianized in this city since the session of Congress, by being whipped and sent to the garret, and found dead in the morning, with blood oozing from nose and ears.

A Democratic MEMBER. Where does that authority come from?

Mr. LOVEJOY. I do not know whether religious rites were had or not. I suppose some pro-slavery priest was invited in to utter impious prayers before God, that the last flagellation might have whipped in Christianity enough to save her precious and never-dying soul. [Laughter.] And now, alarmed, a good black walnut coffin is made and decorated with white ribbons, and placed in the hearse, followed by a hack containing, I presume, the murderess; and my attention is called to the cortege: "See, Mr. LOVEJOY, there is a slave funeral! Is that treating them like brutes?" Look into the coffin! Look into the carriage!!

You say this is horrid. I know it is horrid. I know it is horrid to hold men in slavery. I know it is horrid to doom four million human beings to the condition of chattels, to be held *pro nullis*, *pro mortuis*, *pro quadrupedis*, taken for no persons, for dead persons, for four-footed beasts—men as much entitled to freedom as you and I. Sir, the testimony of all religious societies in the slave States is, that the slaves are still heathen, and it is an utter impossibility to Christianize them and civilize them by this process.

The third point that is relied on to justify slaveholding is, that it is constitutional—that it is guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. Now, Mr. Chairman, I have heard it declared, over and over again, that the Constitution guarantees slavery. I deny it. In no article, in no section, in no line, in no word, in no syllable, can there be any recognition or sanction of human slavery found in the Constitution of the United States. It is not there. It always recognises human beings as persons, and never as property. It does not use the word "slave" or "slavery." Why, sir, when I came up to take the oath to support the Constitution, a whispered buzz, half in earnest and half jocular, passed around: "How can LOVEJOY swear to support the Constitution? How can he take the oath?" I could take the oath to support the Constitution, because I believe in the Constitution, because I hold to it, because my heart is loyal to it. Every part and parcel and portion of it I believe in; but I do not believe in the construction put upon it by those who claim its recognition and sanction of the practice of slaveholding.

Mr. BARKSDALE. No, sir; you stand there today an infamous, perjured villain. [Calls to order.]

Mr. ASHMORE. Yes, he is a perjured villain; and he perjures himself every hour he occupies a seat on this floor. [Renewed calls to order.]

Mr. SINGLETON. And a negro-thief into the bargain.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I swore to support the Constitution, because I believe in it. I do not believe in their construction of it. It is as well known as any historical fact can be known, that the framers of the Constitution so worded it as that it never should recognise the idea of slave property, from the beginning to the ending of it. But the advocates of slavery have affirmed a strange doctrine in regard to the Constitution. They think that, because I swore to support the Constitution, I swore to support the practice of slaveholding. Sir, slaveholding in Virginia is no more under the control or guaranty of the Constitution than slavery in Cuba, or Brazil, or any other part of the world, is under the control or guaranty of the Constitution—not one particle.

Mr. McCLEARNAND. I wish to ask the gentleman whether he has always held that the Constitution deserved to be sustained and accepted—whether, at any time in his life, he held that the Constitution ought to be trodden under foot?

Mr. LOVEJOY. Never, sir; never. I always defended it, and always will, whether it be against the Democrats who pervert it, or the disunionists who trample on it.

Mr. McCLEARNAND. If the gentleman says he never said so, I am not prepared to contradict him, for I know nothing, personally, about it; but I had understood that the gentleman once uttered this language: that "the Constitution was a piece of rotten parchment that ought to be trodden under foot."

Mr. LOVEJOY. Yes; that was thrown in my face once before here, and I denied it. It never had the least foundation in truth. I always defended the Constitution, because it was for liberty. It was ordained by the people of the United States, not by a superannuated old mummy of a judge—and a Jesuit at that—but by the people of the United States, to establish justice, secure the blessings of liberty for themselves and their posterity, and to secure the natural rights of every human being within its exclusive jurisdiction. Therefore I love it.

These men can perceive nothing in the Constitution but slavery. A young man leads a blushing bride to the altar, and takes the marital vow before God and attendant witnesses, to love, cherish, and protect her. There she stands—the divinest thing that God has fashioned and placed upon earth—radiant in the beauty of youth; her cheek glowing with the color of the rose, which expands and fades away into that of the lily; her eyes sparkling like the stars from the depths of blue, and her tresses falling around her neck like the locks of the morning. Is the mole on that fair round neck, or the wart on that plump, soft hand, the woman whom the bridegroom swore to love and cherish? Say, sir, is it? So there is the Constitution—instinct with freedom, radiant with the principles of universal liberty, seizing the inspired utterances of our *Magna Charta*, and reducing them to practical and organic realization. Now, sir, I insist that if the clauses that are deemed to refer to the subject of slavery mean all that the wildest enthusiast claims them to mean, they bear no other relation or proportion to the Constitution which I swear to support, than the excrescence on the hand or neck does to the woman whom

the bridegroom vowed to love and cherish. He loves her not for these things, but in spite of them.

So I love the Constitution, not in consequence of these things which are alleged to be in it, but in spite of them. But you will say, the woman had a right to sport an excrescence on her hand if she chose. I concede it; and, as a Federal law-maker, I concede that the States have the right to sport this fungus of slavery, because it is beyond my reach. But time rolls away. This youthful pair have years of middle age upon them. Olive plants have sprung up around the parent stem. The woman has gone mad. She gloats over the excrescence, which has spread and covers her entire hand. She exclaims, "Husband, this is a dear, sweet darling, a real love of a wart, and I want to engraft it on the hands of all our daughters. I had it when I was married; you vowed to protect me, and I claim the right to transfer it to all the children. If you do not, I will go to Indiana, and get a divorce. I will dissolve the Union between us." The husband, calm and firm, replies: "My dear, I have indulged you in this whim about your hand, because I took you for better or for worse, and I thought it one of your individual rights, which I was not at liberty to disturb. But if you propose to transfer this deformity to the daughters, I say distinctly and decidedly, it cannot be done. This is my prerogative, and I must exercise it." So I say to the slavery propagandists, who desire to transplant slavery to the Territories, and thus fasten it upon the daughters of the Republic, "My dears, it cannot be done."

I say, therefore, Mr. Chairman, that there is no justification for this practice of slaveholding, from the fact that the enslaved race are an inferior race; no justification from the pretended fact that it imparts Christianity and civilization to them; and none in the guaranties of the Constitution. Now, there are some Christian men on the other side of the House; I want to put it to them in all candor—for while I intend to speak of slaveholding with as severe terms of reprobation as I possibly can, I do not intend to offend any individual personally—I want to know of you, Christian gentlemen, how you are going to Christianize men when you do not give them homes?

A MEMBER. Give them what?

Mr. LOVEJOY. Homes—a legal sanction to the conjugal and parental relations. How are you going to Christianize men whom you turn out to herd together like the buffaloes that roam upon the Western prairies? You cannot do it.

It may be asked, sir, when I confess that I have no control over this matter, why discuss it; why talk about it?

Mr. SINGLETON. I want to know if the gentleman gives homes—

Mr. LOVEJOY. I must decline to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. SINGLETON. I want to answer the gentleman's question by asking him another. I want to know if he gives homes to the negroes he carries from the South to Canada and other places?

A MEMBER. The negroes he steals?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Mississippi is not in order.

Mr. BARKSDALE. I hope my colleague will hold no parley with that perjured negro thief.

Mr. LOVEJOY. It is asked, why discuss this question? Why talk about it, when it is confessed that we have no constitutional power to legislate upon it? I will tell you, Mr. Chairman. It will be recollected that Mr. Webster once said, when speaking of the threatened interposition of Russia to snatch Kossuth from the protection of Turkey, for the purpose of sacrificing him on the altar of despotism: "Gentlemen, there is something on earth greater than arbitrary or despotic power. The lightning has its power, and the whirlwind has its power; and the earthquake has its power; but there is something among men more capable of shaking despotic thrones than lightning, whirlwind, or earthquake; and that is the excited and aroused indignation of the whole civilized world."

Sir, before the public sentiment of the Christian and civilized world I propose to hold up to universal reprobation this practice of slaveholding. I propose to hold it up in all its atrocity, in all its hideousness, just as gentlemen have been holding up the practice of polygamy, and reprobating it; and, sir, that public sentiment of the civilized world will burn upon this practice of slavery, and ultimately secure its removal in the only proper way: by the action of the slave States themselves. That is why I discuss it.

Mr. Chairman, my time is passing away, and I must hasten on. I want to come to a few things that have been under discussion during the inchoate condition of the House, whilst this Hall was echoing with ululations that would have drowned the lupine chorus of the Alps, of "Helper," "John Brown," "incendiarism," the "torch of the incendiary," and the "knife of the assassin." One gentleman from Virginia stood up in his place, and wanted to know where there was a man who would endorse the Helper book. He wanted such a man, if there was one here, to stand up, that he might look upon the traitor. Mr. Chairman, I, for one, signed the paper recommending the circulation of the Helper book. I signed it intelligently. I was neither engrossed nor abstracted. I did it because I wanted to do it; and now, if the gentleman wants to look upon that kind of a traitor, *Me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite telum*; I did it. I will sign a recommendation for the circulation of any book that I choose, without asking permission of the gentleman from Missouri, [Mr. CLARK,] or of any other gentleman in the House or out of the House. I will sign a paper recommending the circulation of the Bible or the Koran, Young's Nights Thoughts or Tom Moore's Anacreon, Jonathan Edwards on the Decrees, or Tom Paine's Age of Reason, just as I please.

I claim the privilege, as an American citizen, of writing my name and recommending the circulation of any and every book, without being held amenable to gentlemen upon this floor, or anywhere else. That is my answer in regard to it. I have more than that to say. I say nothing about some points in the book. I have no doubt that there is considerable bombast and fustian and violence of language in it, because the author was educated in a slave State; and

the rhetoric which comes from that quarter is apt to have these characteristics. [Laughter.] But the philosophy—the gist of the book—is what? It is the address of a citizen of a slave State to his fellow-citizens in regard to the subject of slavery, recommending in substance the organization of a Republican party in North Carolina and in all the other slave States. I hope to see that done; and I expect to see it done before very long. You may kill Cassius M. Clay, as you threaten to do; but “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.” You may shed his blood, as you shed the blood of my brother on the banks of the Mississippi twenty years ago—and what then? I am here to-day, thank God, to vindicate the principles baptized in his blood. You may shed his blood—and what then? A Republican party will spring up in Kentucky and in all the slave States ere long; and these disunionists and gentlemen whom you see so violent now, will be displaced by more moderate, and—if I may say so—without being offensive—more sensible men.

I believe in that doctrine. I do not endorse every expression in the Helper book, for I have not studied every expression; but the philosophy of the book, the idea of organizing a party in the slave States as against slavery, I am in favor of, and I expect to see it accomplished. What is the objection to the book? The objection is, that a citizen of the United States, an American citizen, addressed himself to his fellow-citizens, in a peaceful way, through the press, and for this you find fault with him, and say that he must be hanged; and that any man who signed a recommendation for the circulation of his book is a “blighting, blasting, burning, withering curse,” and must not occupy that chair.

I want to know if it has come to this? Has not an American citizen a right to speak to an American citizen? I want the right of uttering what I say here in Richmond. I claim the right to say what I say here in Charleston.

Mr. BONHAM. You had better try it.

Mr. LOVEJOY. Yes, sir. I am going to invoke the aid of the General Government to protect me, as an American citizen, in my rights as an American citizen. I can go to England to-day, and in London, or anywhere else, discuss the question of Church and State; I can discuss the question of a monarchical government as compared with a republican form of government. I can do this anywhere in England; but I cannot go into a slave State and open my lips in regard to the question of slavery—

Mr. MARTIN, of Virginia. No; we would hang you higher than Haman.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I cannot go to a slave State and utter my sentiments to free citizens like myself.

Mr. MILES. Can you go to England and incite the laboring classes to murder the aristocracy, or to assassinate the Queen?

Mr. LOVEJOY. I have no desire to, nor have I any desire to incite such things anywhere else; but I do claim the right of discussing this question of slavery anywhere, on any square foot of American soil over which the stars and stripes float, and to which the privileges and immunities of the Constitution extend. Under that Consti-

tution, which guaranties to me free speech, I claim it, and I demand it.

Mr. BONHAM. I ask the gentleman why he does not attempt to assert his right?

Mr. LOVEJOY. Yes, sir. The gentleman comes from a slave State, in which they are in the habit of speaking of the laboring classes in the free States as “greasy mechanics,” “filthy operatives,” “small-fisted farmers,” and they jeer at us as more degraded than slaves. This insulting language can be, and is, used in the free States without molestation or injury. Yet they say, “if you come here and utter the sentiments which you sincerely believe, we will hang you.”

If a mechanic from a free State goes there and utters the sentiment—that he thinks if they had more white laborers and fewer black ones, that labor in the South would be more respectable—what do you do with him? Denude him, scourge him, and, to intensify the indignity, you drive the knotted thong, by the hand of a slave, deep in his quivering flesh; then tar and feather him; and then put him on the cars, still naked, to be sent a long distance, and threaten with violence the man who has the compassion to give him a cup of coffee. And, finally, after being jeered at every station along the route, this victim of your cruelty, a free citizen, crawls into a stable and begs, stealthily begs, the cast-off clothes of an ostler to hide his nakedness. You drive away young ladies that go to teach school, imprison or exile preachers of the Gospel, and pay your debts by raising the mad-dog cry of abolition against the agents of your creditors.

Mr. BARKSDALE. The meanest slave in the South is your superior. [Cries of “Order!” from the Republican side.]

Mr. MARTIN, of Virginia. I hope gentlemen from the South will let him talk as he pleases, but go away and not listen to him.

A MEMBER, on the Republican side. Well, go. “Stand not on the order of your going, but go at once.”

Mr. LOVEJOY. Mr. Chairman, I say I claim the privilege of going anywhere and everywhere within the limits of this American Republic, as a free citizen, unmolested, and of uttering, in an orderly and legal way, any sentiment that I choose to utter; and, yet, are we allowed to do it? Are we, for that, in these United States, to be subjected to violence, outrage, tar and feathers, burning, imprisonment, and the gallows? Answer that question. I know gentlemen say that self-preservation is the first law of nature; but if you cannot keep slavery and allow free discussion, then, I say, in God’s name, before free discussion and all the rights of free citizens are to be sacrificed to that Moloch of slavery, that Moloch must be immolated at the shrine of liberty, free speech, free discussion, and all those rights that cluster around an American citizen.

Why, Mr. Chairman, a citizen of Rome, when the scourge was already upraised, and about to fall upon him, if he uttered the cry, “I am a Roman citizen,” it arrested that scourge. Well, sir, is not there more of a charm, is it not a prouder position to be an American than to be a Roman citizen? And are we in the nineteenth century, living under this Constitution, with our free institutions—are our persons and our rights to be less sacred than they were under the old

Roman administration eighteen centuries ago and more? That is my response to the question why I recommended the circulation of the Helper book.

Now, what about John Brown! [Cries of "Let's have it!"] This affair of John Brown brings us to the reality of things. This raid confronts us with slavery, and makes us ask, is slaveholding right? and if so, what rights has it? When the curtain rose and startled the nation with this tragedy, John Brown lay there like a wounded lion with his head upon his paws, a sabre cut on his brow, bayonet gashes in his side, the blood oozing out, and life itself apparently ebbing fast; around were certain little specimens of the canine species, snuffing and smelling, and finally one of them yelped out: "Mr. Lion, was the old war-horse that pastures on the Western Reserve with you on this expedition?" The lion slowly raised his head, cast a disdainful side glance upon the inquirer, growled out a contemptuous negative, and reposed his head as before.

In regard to John Brown, you want me to curse him. I will not curse John Brown. You want me to pour out execrations upon the head of old Ossawatimie. Though all the slaveholding Balaks in the country fill their houses with silver, and proffer it, I will not curse John Brown. I do honestly condemn what he did, from my stand-point, and with my convictions I disapprove of his action, that is true; but I believe that his purpose was a good one; that so far as his own motives before God were concerned, they were honest and truthful; and no one can deny that he stands head and shoulders above any other character that appeared on the stage in that tragedy, from beginning to end; from the time he entered the armory there, to the time when he was strangled by Governor "Fussation." [General laughter.]

He was not guilty of murder or treason. He did unquestionably violate the statute against aiding slaves to escape; but no blood was shed, except by the panic-stricken multitude, till Stevens was fired upon while waving a flag of truce. The only murder was that of Thompson, who was snatched from the heroic protection of a woman, and riddled with balls at the railroad bridge. Despotism has seldom sacrificed three nobler victims than Brown, Stevens, and Hazlitt.

"The Avon to the Severn runs,
The Severn to the sea;
And Wickliffe's dust shall spread abroad,
Wide as the waters be."

To continue the quotation from Mr. Webster, with a different application and a slight variation of the language, I say, gentlemen, if the blood of innocent men is taken by an absolute, unqualified, unjustifiable violation of natural law, what will it appease, what will it pacify? It will mingle with the earth; it will mix with the waters of the ocean; the whole civilized world will snuff it in the air; and it will return with awful retribution on the heads of those violators of natural law and universal justice. I cannot say when, or in what form; but depend upon it, if such acts take place, then slavery must look out for the consequences.

As I remarked, Mr. Chairman, this brings us to confront slavery, and ask what right this Caliban has upon earth? I say no right. My honest conviction—and I do not know why gentlemen

need take offence; they need not, unless they choose—my honest conviction is, that all these slaveholding laws have the same moral power and force that rules among pirates have for the distribution of their booty; that regulations among robbers have for the division of their spoils; and although I do not think gentlemen have behaved very handsomely to me, I am going to add, notwithstanding, that I do not mean to say that gentlemen who are slaveholders would be guilty of these particular things—that is not the point—I am talking about this matter in the court of conscience, in the court of right and wrong; and I insist that any laws for enslaving men have just the same moral force as the arrangement among robbers and pirates for distributing their spoils.

I want to know by what right you can come and make me a slave? I want to know by what right you can say that my child shall be your slave? I want to know by what right you say that the mother shall not have her child, given to her from God through the martyrdom of maternity? Hear that soft, exquisite warble of a mother's love:

"Ere last year's suns had left the sky,
A birdling sought my Indian nest,
And folded, ah! so lovingly,
Its tiny wings upon my breast."

Now, where is the wretch who would dare to go up and take that fluttering and panting birdling from the bosom of its mother, and say, "It is mine; I will sell it like a calf; I will sell it like a pig?" What right had that mother to her babe? Was it because she was "Fanny Forrester," the gifted authoress; was it because she was the wife of a venerable and venerated missionary? No, it was because she was its mother; and every slave mother has just as good a title to her babe as "Fanny Forrester" had to hers. No laws can make it right to rob her. I say, in God's name, my child is mine; and yet I have no right to mine that a slavefather has not to his child. Not a particle. The same argument that proves my right to my personal liberty, proves the right of every human being to his. The argument that proves my right to my children, gives the same title, the same sacred claim, to every father. They, as I, get it from their God, and no human enactment can annul the claim. No, sir, never! Therefore, every slave has a right to his freedom, in spite of your slave laws. Every slave has a right to run away, in spite of your slave laws.

I tell you, Mr. Chairman, and I tell you all, that if I were a slave, and had I the power, and were it necessary to achieve my freedom, I would not hesitate to fill up and bridge over the chasm that yawns between the hell of slavery and the heaven of freedom with the carcasses of the slain. Give me my freedom. Hands off, Unthrottle that man. Give him his liberty. He is entitled to it from his God. With these views, I do not think, of course, it is any harm to help away a slave. I told you that a year ago. I need not repeat it.

[A MEMBER. "You steal them."]

Who steals, when a man comes and takes my child from my hearthstone? Who steals, when he comes and takes the babe, flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone? Who steals? I tell you that I have no more hesitation in helping a fugitive slave than I have in snatching a lamb from the jaws of a wolf, or disengaging an infant from the talons of an eagle. Not a bit. Long enough has the nation crouched and cowered in the presence of this stupendous wrong. Here and now I break the spell, and disencant the Republic from the incantation of this accursed sorceress. It is simply a question whether it will pay to go down into the den where the wolf is. [Laughter.] If you would only go into your lair, and crunch the bones and tear the flesh of your victims, we might let you alone; but you will not. You claim the right to go with this flesh in your teeth all over our Territories. We deny it.

My time is passing; I must go on. I wanted to say considerable more about John Brown.

Mr. ADRAIN. I propose that we give the gentleman more time.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I will answer all questions, if the House will give me more time. [Cries of "No! no!" "Give him time!" &c.]

Mr. SINGLETON. No, sir; any gentleman shall have time, but not such a mean, despicable wretch as that!

Mr. LOVEJOY. When the Jews could do nothing else, they spit upon Christ, and said he was possessed of a devil. [Laughter.] One of the earliest settlements of Virginia was made by a fugitive slave. John Smith was captured in war, and sold to a high-toned, chivalrous Turk, and put at the task of threshing. The master rode up to the barn-door one day, and said, "Jack, you rascal, why don't you thresh faster?" Jack—*horresco referens*—flew at his master, killed him with his flail, (oh, for a Harper's Ferry committee!) sprang into the vacant saddle, and escaped, and came and settled Jamestown. Oh for a South-side preacher to admonish John to stay and serve his master, whose money he was, like a good "Christian dog!"

Let us look a moment at this question, aside from its moral aspects. And I want to know what right slavery, or a slaveholder, has to go with slaves into the common Territories of the United States? You talk about the equality of the States, and I grant it. The citizens of a slave State have all the rights in the Territories that a citizen of a free State has. You have the right, I concede, to go into the common Territories, and live there, with any kind of property we can take, but you have not the right to take slaves. This is the distinction I make.

At a liberal estimate, there are not more than two millions of people in the United States interested in slave labor. There are only four hundred thousand slaveholders. There are thirty millions of people in this country. There are twenty-eight millions interested in the system of free labor, and two millions in that of slave labor. The free system accommodates some eight millions in the slave States better than the slave system. Here is the point. If slavery goes into the Territories, free labor cannot go there.

The presence of slavery, without any local law for the purpose, is the exclusion of free labor. If you take slavery there, I cannot go there with the New York *Tribune*, the *Evening Post*, the *Independent*, or any similar paper, religious or secular. I cannot go with the minister I desire to hear preach the Gospel. Free schools cannot go there. You say, indeed, we can go. Yes; so all may go to a public house. It is common to all who choose to make it their temporary abode. All are invited to the *table d'hôte*. The landlord opens the doors of the dining hall, and says, "Walk in, gentlemen!" but if a man sitting there is leprous, dripping with a contagious disease, no one will go in. It is really as much an exclusion as if the doors were closed and barred against his entrance. So, if slavery goes, freedom cannot go. I favor the equality of the States. I favor the right of every citizen of a slave State to go into the Territories; but I deny that he has the right to practice slaveholding there, for it is not an institution—it was never instituted; never established by law—but a practice, like polygamy. I say that they have not a right to go there and practice this high crime, so injurious to man and so offensive to God. And this is the question: whether these twenty-eight million people shall be accommodated, or two million people shall be accommodated; for, I repeat, the presence of slavery is the utter exclusion of free labor and the institutions of freedom. I deny no one their rights. The slave States are equal to the free States. It is a poor, pitiful, and paltry patriotism that cannot take in the entire extent of its country; but I do deny that slavery has the same right as freedom in this country. Freedom is the Isaac; freedom is the heir of promise. Slavery is the Hagar and Ishmael, and they must go into the wilderness, and freedom shall have the entire inheritance. God and the fathers gave it to freedom and free institutions. It belongs to freedom, not to me; not to the citizens of the free States, but to freedom, to the utter exclusion of slaveholding.

Now, gentlemen, I know you are in a mood to take a little advice. [Laughter.] I tell you, I love you all. [Renewed laughter.]

Mr. McQUEEN. I utterly repudiate your love.

Mr. LOVEJOY. Sinners did that of Christ; but he loved them still. [Laughter.]

Mr. McQUEEN. I do not think he loves you much.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I am afraid that I am not much like him. He went, however, and preached to the spirits in prison; and I think I never approximated so nearly to him as in this regard, while making proclamation of the holy evangel of God to sinners in this House. I tell you of the slave States that you must emancipate your slaves. It belongs to you, and not to us. You must transform them from slaves into serfs, and give them homes, and protect and guard the sanctity of the family. We shall not push you. If you say that you want a quarter of a century, you can have it; if you want

half a century, you can have it. But I insist that this system must ultimately be extinguished. There is no question about it. You who advocate the perpetuity of slavery are like a set of madcaps, who should place themselves on the top of an iceberg which had disengaged itself from the frozen regions of the north, and begun to float downward, and downward, through the warm climates. The sun shines, and melts it; the soft winds blow and melt it; the rains descend and melt it; the water ripples around and melts it; and then these wild visionaries, who fancied they could sail an iceberg through the tropics, finding that their craft is dissolving beneath them, start up, and blaspheme sunshine and rain and zephyr, and, mouthing the heavens, tell Jehovah that unless he stops the shining of the sun, and the blowing of the winds, and the falling of the rain, they will crumble his universe "from tur-ret to foundation stone." [Great laughter.]

Do you not think God would feel bad; and would not the archangels tremble at the chivalry? [Renewed laughter.] You may call this extravagant; but you can no more perpetuate slavery, and will no more dissolve this Union in order to perpetuate it, than you can stop the shining of the sun, or the ripple of the sea, the descent of rain, or the blowing of the wind; nay, no more than you can subdue the ocean, when it lashes itself into fury, and dashes its crested mountain billows against the rocks. It is as preposterous to think of taking slavery down through the civilization of the ages, as to think of floating an iceberg through the tropics. It is against the order of things. I am willing to concede that you can do anything that any equal number of men can achieve. I did mean to taunt you about Harper's Ferry, but I believe I will not. I am willing to concede that you are as brave as other men, although I do not think you show it by this abusive language, because brave men are always calm and self-possessed. God feels no anger, for he knows no fear.

I say, you can do anything that other men can do. You can preserve and perpetuate this system, if any equal number of men could do it; but the stars in their courses are fighting against you; God, in his providence, is fighting against you. The universe was established upon the great principle of justice and truth; it may be jostled out of its place for a little while, but it will, sooner or later, fall back to its grooves. You must sacrifice slavery for the good of your country. Do this, and you will have the sympathy, the prayers, and the co-operation, of the entire nation.

Refuse or neglect this; refuse to proclaim liberty through all the land, to all the inhabitants thereof, and the exodus of the slave will be through the Red Sea. It is a well-known physiological as well as psychological fact, that ancestral characteristics reappear after a long interval of years, and even of generations, as streams disappear and gush out at a distant point. It is also well known that the Saxon blood is being infiltrated into the veins of the enslaved. By and by some Marion will be found, calling his guerrilla troops from the swamps and everglades of South Carolina; and Patrick Henry will reappear in the Old Dominion, shouting, as of old, "Give us liberty, or give us death!" Then will transpire those scenes which troubled the prophetic vision of Jefferson, and made him tremble for his country when he remembered that God was just, and that his justice would not sleep forever, and that every divine attribute would be arrayed upon the side of the struggling bondmen. And he justified the uprising, by saying the little finger of American slavery was thicker than the loins of British despotism.

Sir, Virginia cannot afford, the country cannot afford, to continue a practice fraught with so much of peril. It is better to remove the magazine, than to be kept evermore in dread of a lighted match. The future glory and usefulness of this nation cannot be sacrificed to this system of crime. The nations of the earth are to be taught by our example. The American Republic must repose queen among the nations of the earth. Slavery must die. *Carthago est delenda*.

The philosophy, therefore, and the lesson which the slave States ought to have learned from John Brown, and from all these events, are not these expressions of rage and vengeance. Instead of being stimulated to revenge, Virginia ought to have learned the lesson of penitence. Instead of arraying herself in sheep's-gray, she ought to have put on sackcloth and ashes. Instead of imbibing the distillation of corn, mixed with the products of the poultry-yard, she ought to have drunk the waters of bitterness, in view of her sin of slaveholding.

Mr. MARTIN, of Virginia. And if you come among us, we will do with you as we did with John Brown—hang you up as high as Haman. I say that as a Virginian.

Mr. LOVEJOY. I have no doubt of it.

[Here the hammer fell.]